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Media Classes or Codes of Inequality*

Abstract

*The subject matter of this article is an incorporation of contemporary media systems within the cross-linking processes of the social structure, and in particular, meditative mechanisms of the forming and marking of the life-styles by means of transmission of the generalized codes of social inequality and cultural distinctions. Against the background of the Ukrainian materials the empirical **classes of preferences**, which are understood as patterns of correspondence between media sources and communication practices of the audiences varied by the status and cultural characteristics, are considered.*

This material is an answer to invitation to discussion on prospects of the class analysis in sociology [1]. It has been more rarely and carefully applied to the modern media. The only British tradition (according to Scott Lash) still continues to hold to the class approach towards the media institution, and it is due to the living environment of working class historically developed (it was formed as *Gemeinschaft*). In our case, we use the “class” language as a way to talk about social-and-cultural differentiation by basing on indisputable phenomenon of human inequality.

It seems there are two most evident associations with the “media classes” verbal construction: first, references to the owners of “media empires”, “media moguls” as journalists and politologists like to call them, secondly, references to advanced users of global computer networks. All others are left aside because they are far from the degree that

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Translated from the Ukrainian text “Media-klassy abo kody nerivnosti”, *Sotsiologhiia: teoriia, metody, marketynh*, 2003, № 2, pp. 16–32.

could make it possible to associate them (undoubtedly) with the class terms even on different grounds. In sociological aspect, we might have considered this moment settled if there were no intentions to go on with structural substantiation of inequality in modern society. They become even more persistent when the society is called “informational”, that is when resiliency of structures (as to classical sociological theories) seems to be no longer as their decisive ontological characteristic.

Communication and Reflexion about Order

Two mentioned associations result at least in two different approaches towards application of the “class” concept and its derivatives. In the first case, we talk about the “elite” of elites, really powering class not only in economy but also in the political realm. Concentration of capital and evident political domination are unconditional attributes of power including not only its scale but also the opposite — infringed — position. Such application of the concept will always taste of dramatic history of classes and biographies. On the contrary, the second case shows restraint as to the famous meta-narrative and ideological pathos hinting at the out-of-class perspective of the near future. Bill Gates promises: “The power and versatility of digital technology will raise new concerns about individual privacy, commercial confidentiality, and national security. There are equity issues that will have to be addressed because the informational society should serve all of its citizens, not just the technically sophisticated and the economically privileged” [2]. It means that so far only free users of the Internet and telecommunications take the best class places while being transported through social spaces on the contrary to large groups hopelessly attached to the certain social positions.

Associations with media classes can be others but anyway they manifest the basic “insights” of what modern sociology refers to the “class analysis”. Bourdieu clearly stated them when called the final part of his “Distinctions” as “Classes and Classifications” [3]. As a matter of fact, there is a room between these constructs for mystification because the basic one and its derivative could be easily turned over; as a result, the habitual relations of a container and its contents would be perverted: are the classes results of classification or their indisputable existence is a base for classification work. The bright example of Borges’ animals that impressed Foucault can be explained by the fact that the “common place for meetings” in this taxonomy is ruined. “Not the neighborhood of things is impossible but a common ground for this neighborhood. What a place for

meeting of animals “j) violent in madness, k) uncountable, l) drawn by a fine brush of camel wool” could be apart from immaterial voice counting them or the page where this is written? Where could they be contrasted apart from language having no place in the space?” [4]. For social categories, the space of meeting, “the same for both sides”, is predetermined as a social world itself, though it can be regarded in so many different planes that it would be impossible to find any settled principles of this division. In what plane it would be appropriate to place the middle and working classes if they are not only “classes on the page”, as Bourdieu said; would their tandem be more predictable than tandem of “black lesbians” and “Ukrainian villagers”?

There will be always somebody to convince us that the chosen classification is appropriate because it is a natural reaction of social subjects to the really existing inequality of positions, it is unavoidable in our common space. Bourdieu explains that, in symbolic classifications of social reality, which can pretend to be scientific, or political credo or arguments of practical mind, there are represented not only “objective” structures of the reality but also ability of identities to conduct differentiation, as well as exposure, of generalized social world ideas, its multilateral segmentations, legitimacy of agents’ distribution in accordance with a matrix of recognizable positions [5].

Continuous competition for the best symbolic classifications of common space, irrespective of their nature: evident or latent, realized or sensitive, is an evidence of necessity and existential significance of this reaction or reflexive acts. Social categories being not the social structures but the products of classifications can be organized by various principles: Aristotle’s (and Kant’s) categories of logic, as it is seen in “Primitive Classifications” by Durkheim and Moss [6], or, as by Bourdieu, categories of “taste” understood from the Kant’s aesthetic judgment model but cultivated by the class ethos in reality. Reflexive sociology of the end of 1980s constructed the structure analysis perspective that shifted accents to the multi-layer character (two layers at least) of interpretation approaches to structural morphology including self-reflexion of its basic aggregations — institutionalized unions of agents [7; 8]. Talking about structural bases of reflexivity in the late modern (observing and trying to understand itself with the help of social theories in particular), Scott Lash reveals three measures: cognitive, aesthetic, and hermeneutic [9]. It means preferences of sociological reflexion in ways of concept and understanding of the social and the modern life order as a whole; that is epistemology is preferable to having of ontological picture. “The theory

by Beck and Giddens supposes that reflexive is 'cognitive' in its nature. Traditions of the Age of the Enlightenment from Kant through Durkheim to Habermas presuppose criticism of a certain (of existing social conditions) with the help of universal (knowing, well-informed) action". "Instead of this, — Lash writes, — I would like to attract attention not to the cognitive but aesthetic measurement of reflexivity. It is localized by the tradition — from Baudrillard through Walter Benjamin to Adorno — in which, on the contrary, criticism of failed totality of the high modern, its universals is carried out through the certain. Here the certain means aesthetics and involved not only in the 'high art' but also in the popular culture, aesthetics of the everyday life" [9, p. 111]. However, the second kind of the interpretative work is within the limits of metaphysical universe too. The cognitive reflexivity positions a calculable subject by opposing it to fortuity, conceptual to mimetic, referent to signifier, narrative to event. The aesthetic reflexivity prefers the opposite. To resolve this dilemma, there could be helpful an interpretation inspired by hermeneutics with its intention to the "verity" and directed to find the ontologically legitimized formation capable of a valuable existence-in-the-world, that is it would refer (in the result) to the non-structural bases of structures and correlate the certain with the certain. As distinct from the utilitarian individualism worried about ideas on "rules" and "resources" (Giddens) or the expressive individualism of desire, growth of which is used in characteristics of the postmodern or the late modern, Lash, like many others, sees an essential potential for reflexivity in the restored "us", in a new solidarity, and, first of all, in a *community* with common meanings and common practices. Such "real" communities (strong points of order) can be found in Bourdieu's rather autonomous social fields: political, religious, academic, artistic, and field of journalism.

It seems that the present has special conditions for actualization of reflexive mechanisms, it happens due to multiplying chances of reflexivity translation of any kind. And this is observed as a "double hermeneutics" with two mediums — a social agent and expert systems (Giddens), or a growing variety of channels and ways for reproduction of "fight of classifications" for cultural hegemony due to which there intensify multi-effects of structures being originally "double" because they are incorporated into ideas about themselves (Bourdieu), or through a complex structure of the public sphere (Habermas). The reflexive action, understood as mental and body reactions, is also stimulated by perfection of general and special codes of its recognition, tools and regimes of signification making its signs all-sufficient and aggressive, and widen-

ing exchange networks with reflexive product between informational and communication systems. At last, all this corresponds to a wider paradigm about qualitative changes in human experience happening in the present: the modern has overcome the millennium domination of Nature over Culture and opened a problem discourse about the reverse colonization: Culture over Nature. As to Manuel Castells, “We are just entering a new stage in which Culture refers to Culture, having superseded Nature to the point that Nature artificially revived (‘preserved’) as a cultural form” [10]. The reflexivity namely means this reference, which could not be constructed as one of the key factors in the reproduction of social order and inequality beyond developed informational networks consequently. The latter suppose widening of reflexivity by definition, if we understand information as a relevant message and communication, according to Luhmann, as a recognized selectivity of messages [11]. Capability of cultural reflexivity significantly depends on position of social agents towards informational and communication structures. But how this position corresponds to the economically grounded class one and what risks for the class structure is from the implanted informational network are still a subject of further discussions. Anyway, the media field precedent promises that answers will be not curt and simple.

Generalized Codes of Structure

Almost always power is the synonym of structures. Let us regard the power as something from which influence we try to free ourselves, then the power syndrome of information was rather correctly diagnosed in the appeal by Michel Houellebecq — to stop its receiving and cut off the informational and advertising stream at least temporarily. The many would join in this artistic protest against excessive requirements by media to contribute all energy to processing of insignificant particularities [12]. In Luhmann’s terms, it would rather mean the opposite: a reproach on inefficient power refused to control selectivity of others, its inability to ensure selective coordination of social systems that could be secured only by means of communication [11]. So, irrespective of understanding, the power of media is still doubtful, with lack and redundancy at the same time. Involvement of media into modern informational and communication structure does not ensure any intensive use of communication resources of their domination. There are still cultivated forms of control, usual for institutions and modified, that involve more and more intimate spheres, like desires and body. No matter, we describe the con-

trol in the terms of the postmodern ethics or traditional sociology of the mass communications, in the terms of seduction or ideology, the idea of the media as an instance controlling an audience will not change.

Studies on the media in the power context regularly deal with ambivalence because the context is continuously perverted turning to the “media as power” perspective or to the “media and power” one. As to the first perspective, relations between the media and political power are characterized by prejudice in all times. Of course, the scientific reflexion, both liberal and critical, has partly lost its initiative in cognition of the media’s protecting public function or its application for the retranslation of power. Statements that news promote “definition of the political situation envolved by the political elite” [13] become less interesting than looking for intriguing evidences of impersonal and personalized actions of economic imperatives as well as cultural and technological determinants of current situation [14]. Both power perspectives of the media cover each other and deform the autonomous “field of journalism” that would look very familiar reality for Ukrainian readers of Pierre Bourdieu’s interpretations [15]. In its turn, the “media class” of journalists organizes actual interactions in the tense market segment of power and capital according to its own rules and practicing self-reflexion and self-reference.

Participation of the media in power distribution is determined by its inherited duality; in this case, by double presence as a historically formed social institution (traditional press and broadcasting media, first of all) and an ontological representative of informational network structures. Both organisms are interconnected; they use complex mechanisms of media, so, the media influence is protected from direct causal correlation. However, the belonging to one or another side could explain differences in ways of their involvement in the structure formation and reproduction of inequality. These differences are determined by at least two basic parameters: different areas of reflexion as to the social structure and different symbolically generalized codes of social inequality understood in the sense of Luhmann’s communications theory [11, p. 13].

Areas or “covering” zones of the media institution are determined by intention to observe geography of society, while networks exist without certain borders, they tend to almost infinite openness. Locally and naturally, there is cultivated a favorable environment for inertia and resistance to all infringements of the status quo that would raise doubts about integrity of identity-society. Through various mediators — in this case, traditional media — the latter emits and produces various protective codes of order that were developed as a result of selections that

proved their success. It is rather easy to enter a space where these codes are translated especially if you take into account that “national” (I mean local) television is widely available. And belief of media that they cover local territories as much as possible can be realized with the help of better conditions for perception of the translated codes of order or structure / power. One of such conditions is sufficient and acceptable generalization of symbols organizing the code chains. If, according to Luhmann, we understand generalization as a “generalization of sense orientations making it possible to fix the same sense by different partners in different situations in order to conclude the same statements” [11, p. 52], then it is true that traditional media work with symbolic combinations of broad generalization, and the codes translated by the media institution tend to be universal.

On the contrary, involvement of audiences in the principally broken global space of communications is limited, measured and strictly regulated by qualification and economic status of users. As to codes related to the knowledge / power complex and spread in informational networks, their efficiency is determined by specific character and multi-level generalization of symbols. It means that the cultural reflexion regarding new structural order needs to be related to it, otherwise its codes would not be perceived, they would be uncertain, would form corresponding expectations and practices based on these expectations [11, p. 52].

Space differences between both social organisms, to which the mass media belong, concern branch segments of cultural experience too: traditional institutionalized media form domains of the style of life manifestations, they exist in consumption zone of audiences and act as secondary structures, while information-communication networks organize, apart from consumption, the basic sphere of society — production. Namely this difference initiates inequality in structural influence of two media identities, they either relate to structure development of already differentiated social space or promote radical structural shifts. Information-communication conglomerates and networks succeed in the latter under conditions of turning an information into a kind of capital.

Audiences: Winners and Losers

Ideally, the newest network structures offer to social agents absolutely different positions derived from the idea of the most effective production, delivery and processing of information. In practice, mainly in less dynamic society, they encounter an existing social structure, pro-

mote repositioning of groups according to innovation criteria and establish new structural vacancies on the same principles. Such processes are accompanied by dual mobility in middle classes (in Weber's sense), some part of which becomes "winners"; another goes to "losers" in the forming structural order. These terms, taken from game vocabulary and spread in the western literature (Lash, Castells), add to the feeling that this distribution was conducted by structures as a drawing and reflexion of class formations has nothing to do with it. The destiny of losers was predictable: those whose attitudes to changes are negative still belong to the same kinds that were mentioned by Mannheim fifty years ago: representatives of older generation, professions losing their importance, "former recipients of independent income whose position prevented them from understanding of happening changes" [16]. In Ukraine and other territories of the former USSR, these social categories became "double losers": as a consequence of inner crash of economy and general system mutation, and as a result of their disparity with requirements of the informational age. A list of categories was completed with new ones, such as "intelligent" professions inclined to reflexivity and the class of workers with proletarian consciousness. A part of 40-year-old citizens also became a "lost generation". The current winners of informational society cannot boast that their self-reflection was a decisive factor of stability, it is not enough for meeting requirements of their positions that involve the multi-vector and intensive reaction to various informational flows serving the labor and consumption markets. Society needs economical forms to produce selective achievements in communications and decision-making: these are expert systems. It means that reflexive mechanisms being developed by information-communicative structures offer a working sample for acceptance of information under conditions of specialized knowledge and codes of power / capital / inequality being generalized in the spaces limited by this specialization.

Expert systems, understood as wide as possible, unite professionals versed in the subject and / or data bases on material carriers. They are also institutionalized formations that could be legitimately charged with a part of individual reflexive work. The task of expert systems is to ensure easy and quick consumption wherever it takes place: in political debates, a giant terminal of modern airport or private real estate company. Regular references to expert systems is a privilege of those who take economically stable positions, including various strata of middle class, qualified workers of progressive branches. Quality and quantity of the used expert systems show how close they are to a new informational or-

der, and together with other indicators, determine distances between winners and losers of various status groups.

The mass media is involved in such activities too. Combining different resources, television, etc., the mass media work as an expert system not only in the knowledge about the world and its components among which there are those till recently closed for the uninitiated. TV and other mass media translate, with the help of symbolic means, the generalized codes of dispositional notions of social inequality and cause reflexive states as to claims, chances and practices that are corrected by social structures.

As it happens with any expert system, the mass media are trusted in or are not trusted. The issue of trust in expert systems seems to appear spontaneously because we talk about the natural reaction to information. However, this is doubtful, and those who discuss it could be of radically opposite understanding about relations between the reflexivity and trust in experts. For instance, Giddens reveals in mentality of the late modern an evident shift to trust in expert systems, and Beck thinks that self-reflexivity is manifested in freedom from these structures [7]. The mass media belong to unusual expert systems that have got criticism about its autonomy and independence since it has been formed. Modern media involved in informational networks seem to be more appropriate to the definition. Nevertheless, the mass media audiences being consumers of various expert systems or media sources are perfectly fit in the structural matrix of modern society. It is known that audiences do not create classes, communities; they cannot be regarded as “taste” unions or interest groups. They are a classical sample of aggregation formed of “atomized individuals”. The only thing seems to unite them in sociologist’s imagination — it is their ability to perceive a media source as a message about the social order with its numerous inequalities, as a code of social and cultural inequality that organizes practices.

Social and Cultural Segmentation of the Media

Let us use an empirical classification on media consumption to support the above-mentioned.

Ukrainian media market is wide enough. Variety of sources impresses by statistical figures. Each source, a newspaper, radio or TV channel whatever, cares about its audience scale or at least tries to observe it. Magic of ratings affects the media commercial activity as well as political bodies worrying about control over the mass media. As a matter

of fact, exact figures are interesting only for main players in the media market. As to us, a general picture of informational products consumption is more important, it will give the facts necessary for studies on the current cultural conditions as well as social and cultural differentiation. It is also important to reveal the mechanisms of cultural position reproduction in correlation between the cultural and social that seems to disappear or at least form new combinations bringing doubts about the former cultural dominance or marginals. The presented segmentation of Ukrainian media is one of the reflexive ways in this subject (see Fig. 1)¹.

The social and cultural map that could be called basic in Ukrainian media space registers closeness of sources (press, radio, TV) and audiences differentiated according to the basic social parameters (*age, education, financial status assessed subjectively, language considered as a native*). The map was constructed as a connection of empirical consumption of leading media units by different social categories (correspondence-analysis); it translates a general image of the market and presents cultural practices of population related to the mass communications. Mutual attraction of media sources and audiences depicts areas of voluntary or forced preferences. Voluntary — because there is a choice even if it is priority of professional standards, in case of media, or possibility to switch to another channel, in case of viewers. Forced — because all options are limited by market imperative and consumption conditions. Mutual attraction cannot be called mutually pleasant: one third of adults do not trust in the mass media (30.6%, according to the data of 2002), almost three fourths think negatively about advertisement; besides, it irritates two people of every five (71.0%, 39.4%). In their turn, the media do not care about hiding the self-sufficiency, passion for advertisement or inclination to political strategies hardly relevant in the opinion of people tuned to “objective” information. Nevertheless, the mutual aspect is a vital condition for both social organisms. Their preferences grow and divide because of various desires provoked by the diversity idea; they are cleaned by pragmatism inherent in both or fade despite it. But anyway, areas of preferences outline cultural segments,

1

According to the results of sociological monitoring being conducted in February–March 2002 by the Institute of Sociology, NAS of Ukraine. They are presented in the bulletin “Ukrains'ke suspil'stvo: vid vyboriv do vyboriv” (Ukrainian Society: From Elections to Elections). — Kyiv, 2002. — P. 59–62. On the social and cultural map there are 50 media positions (sources and positions of the “non-consumption” of press, radio, television). Nominal scale of the newspapers is limited with those read by more than 1% respondents (during one week before questioning). Representative sample (for adults of Ukraine) consists of 1799 respondents.

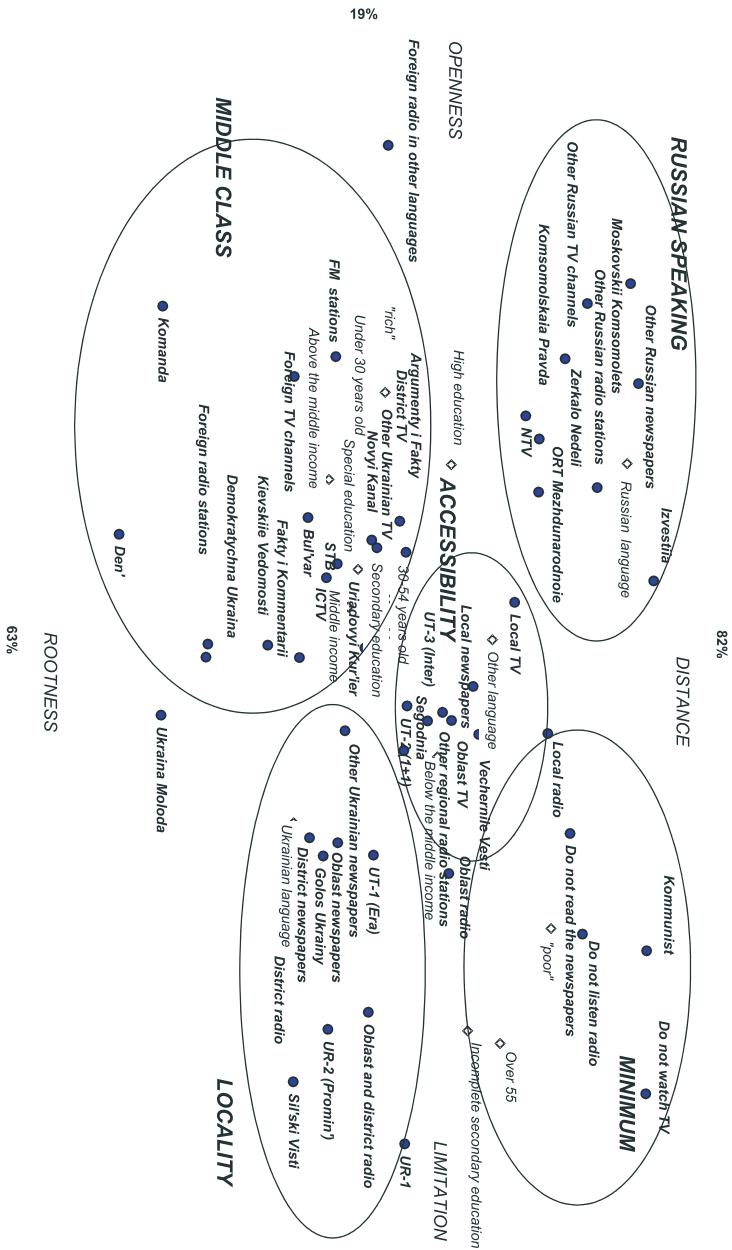


Fig. 1. Social and Cultural Segmentation of Media, Ukraine, 2002 (correspondence-analysis)

fields of interaction between media and audiences, show the social and cultural gradations being formed. It is impossible to be sure what goes first: the territory or the map (in the sense of Baudrillard). The formed cultural positions claim for subjects, whereas cultural actions of individuals gradually nominate the niches still free of their legitimized status. The media are involved in both processes.

Borders of formations meant as cultural practices of media and population (media with “their” audience or social categories with “their” media) are unclear, sometimes even disappearing as in case of two massively consumed national channels, UT-2 (“Studiia 1+1”) and UT-3 (“Inter”). But in most cases, these borders can be observed. For example, two thirds of young people under 30 and only one of ten over 55 listen to FM radio.

Concentration of audiences around a source as well as concentration of sources, happens due to variety of factors. Even if only basic characteristics of audiences are taken into consideration, the number of parameters measuring distances between objects is large (see Table 1). At the same time, two of them are the most essential because they describe interrelations between sources and audiences fully enough (by 82%). According to the picture interpretation, they are *material statuses* of readers, listeners and viewers as well as their *native language*. That is income and the cultural identity projected by Ukrainian or Russian language or the special combination of material and cultural capitals, as to Bourdieu, determine first and foremost their media consumption and style orientations.

Table 1

Measurement of Distances between Media Sources and Audience
(Number of sources is 50, number of respondents is 1799)

Measurements (factors)	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11
Inertia	63%	19%	6%	3%	2%	2%	1%	1%	1%	1%	1%
Cumulative	63%	82%	88%	91%	93%	95%	96%	97%	98%	99%	100%

In this space on the social and cultural map of media, there are five clusters of cultural practices in the mass communication sphere centered by TV channels being the most accessible media sources (see Fig. 1). Channels with the maximal coverage are watched up to 80% of adults in case of UT-2 (“Studiia 1+1”), UT-3 (“Inter”), and up to a half of adults in case of UT-1 (“Era”); channels with medium coverage are watched by one

third of adults ("Novyi Kanal", "ICTV", "STB"). The week audience of the city and oblast television amounts 16–18%, the same percent related to the viewers of Russian channels: "ORT-Mezhdunarodnoie" and "NTV". Apart from those who listen to popular FM stations, radio listeners as a whole never exceed the level settled by TV, so they involve TV watchers in different combinations depending on rural or urban population. The same picture can be seen as to newspapers read by one of twelve (maximum six) adults. Television as a whole covers almost all and directs cultural "mainstream", leaving aside those who do not watch TV (6%) mainly because they lack for TV sets (4%).

National channels UT-2 ("Studiia 1+1") and UT-3 ("Inter") form a wide zone of "ASSESSIBILITY" (see Fig. 1) in which most people are involved (80.4% and 76.2% correspondingly). Due to this absolutely total coverage, it is not a choice but the everyday media context of individual's existence irrespectively of social specifications. Of course, there are differences in preferences between the channels. UT-2 ("Studiia 1+1") watch more people speaking Ukrainian than Russian (83.8% vs. 74.5%) and of all income levels: from below than middle to the high (82.3–84.1%). For the audience of UT-3 ("Inter") the language preference is not significant (75.5% and 77.4%); the people with middle-income level watch it more than representatives of other income groups (80.6%). However, in the general picture of media segmentation, these differences are not crucial. Oblast television, as well as the city channels, belongs to the area of accessibility too; families of different material statuses (15.7–16.0%) watch it. The same criteria bring here oblast radio stations, rather cheap newspapers: "Segodnia" (7%) and "Vecherniie Vesti" (6%).

"Accessibility" exists almost for everyone, but only categories with the income under middle are oriented to it as a dominant cultural practice, those media sources are basic for them. This domain is the most open for other audiences too, not only of Ukrainian or Russian native language. General tendency in consumption of these mass media is in favor of rather city audiences than village ones, though it less concerns TV: differences between volumes of these audiences vary from 5 to 8% (in case of "Inter" to 14%). Local newspapers are more popular in cities with population from 50 to 500 hundred (53%) and significantly less in villages (16%). As to regions, the area of preferences to the "accessibility" shifts to the Central, Eastern and Southern Ukraine.

"MIDDLE CLASS" concentrates the most numerous media sources involving young people and of middle age, with secondary and higher education, with middle and higher income. In this case, it would be appro-

priate to talk about use of the media as expert systems, it relates first and foremost to quantitative indicators. “STB”, “ICTV”, and “Novyi Kanal” form oblast domain. Their consumption of which grows together with income (up to 43–47% among categories with the income over middle and high, while the sample average is 30–36%). The reason why these channels were chosen as well as local ones and others, relates to availability of cable networks, multi-channel TV sets or several televisions in a family. The language preference is not decisive. Volumes of audiences (of these channels) differ by 3–4% as to language groups with a slight shift to Russian speaking people in case of “Novyi Kanal” or to Ukrainian speaking people in case of “ICTV”. So, the language identity gives way to the well-being and stability. Consumption of radio, as a cultural practice of “middle class” is regulated mostly by age and financial status too. This zone includes FM radio that is listened actively by young people under 30 (67%) and people of mature age (43%), with middle and higher income (48–63%). For comparison: this part among elder citizens (over 55) and those with low income is significantly less (10%, 22%). Not very numerous “elite” audiences of foreign media (1–4%) also widen in groups of high income – up to 4–6% in case of radio stations in foreign and local languages and up to 9–12% in case of TV.

The most active readers are also in the “middle class” zone. They are interested in the popular socio-political and commercial press. Among the most consumed ones, there are the following all-Ukrainian leaders: “Argumenty i Fakty” (17%), “Fakty i Kommentarii” (13%), “Bul’var” (8%), “Kievskii Vedomosti” (5%), “Komanda” (3%). These newspapers often read people who gain at least “enough for life” according to their words. For example, readers of “Argumenty i Fakty” form 20–22% of those with middle income and higher; as to “Fakty i Kommentarii” and “Bul’var”, their audience mainly belongs to people with over middle income (20%, 12%). This tendency is registered for the political press too, such as “Demokratychna Ukraina”, “Den”, “Ukraina Moloda” newspapers, the readers of which amount 1–3% as a whole, but this number increases in groups of high income (up to 4%). Reading newspapers becomes a cultural practice of people with good income. The only newspaper, official “Uriadovyi Kur’ier”, reveals significance of educational levels: the part of its readers with high (and unfinished high) education consists 7.5%, while its average for Ukraine is 3.5%. The territory of the “middle class” media includes cities of all regions though the Western Ukraine is a bit behind here.

Similarly to the “middle class”, the “*RUSSIAN SPEAKING*” zone lies in the “well-being” part of the social and cultural map of media with a privilege concentrated in the south of Ukraine, in cities. The leading regulator is an inherited identity of Russian language. Centers of attraction are the Russian channels “NTV” and “ORT-Mezhdunarodnoie” watched by 26–28% of Russian speakers and 11–13% of Ukrainian ones, 35% and 30% correspondingly in the Southern region as a whole. As to the press, among preferences, there are traditionally Russian, former All-Union, newspapers with Russian speaking readers: “Izvestiia” (3% vs. 1%), “Moskovskii Komsomolets” (3% vs. 1%), “Komsomolskaia Pravda” (9% vs. 4%). The latter is the most popular among the highly educated (10%), in the Southern region (10%). All other Russian TV channels, radio stations and newspapers belong to this zone. As to Ukrainian editions, there is a political weekly published in both languages, “Zerkalo Nedeli”. It is the most popular among Russian speakers with high education (2.3%, 2.5%, while the average value is 1.3%).

The media area “*LOCALITY*”, with the opposite language, is represented by the national mass media: national TV channel UT-1 (“Era”), watched by a half of Ukrainian speakers (55%) and one third of Russian speaking respondents (35%), national radio UR-1 (23% vs. 8%), and UR-2, “Promin” (18% vs. 6%). The fact that people watch the TV is hardly related to their income but the falling interest in the radio was registered among those with good income (up to 6%). “Golos Ukrainy”, a newspaper of the Verkhovna Rada, represents the press with some language preferences (7% vs. 4%), and “prominent” “Sil’ski Visti” consume mostly Ukrainian native speakers (12% vs. 3%), with incomplete secondary education (13%, the average is 9%), over 55 years old (11%) with all levels of income. In this area, there are also oblast and district press and radio. The area is shifted to the Western and Central regions, towns and villages.

Lastly, “*MINIMUM*” as a media practice of mainly socially weak categories that include most those who are practically ejected from the mass communications, though such ejection is rather conditional if there is the totally covering TV. Moreover, the fact of being distanced from the mass media sources can be of different cultural quality. The hierarchy structure of social parameters is clearly reproduced only in case of radio. Those who do not listen to radio are mostly over 55 (31%), with incomplete secondary education (32%), and low income (35%). It is less typical of all young people under 30 (16%), those with high or over secondary education (17%), middle and high income (20–21%). As to the press and television, there was registered the principle of middle and poles at least

in the age and income groups. Young and elder, “rich” and “poor” people read less than respondents of mature age and middle income (18–25% vs. 13–15%). In case of TV, the corresponding figures are less expressive but support the same feature: 4–4.5% among categories of mature age and middle income versus 6–9% among young and elderly people, 8–12% among “rich” and “poor”. It means that marginal media practices are more inherent in the weakest and strongest status groups with the only difference that in the first case it looks like isolation, while in the second one we can talk about the Internet and other sources that widened media space and replaced traditional sources. For example, among respondents with high income, the part of the Internet users is over one forth (29%), while the average in Ukraine is only 4%. So, the “real minimum” means real limitations in information characterizing social inactivity as a whole.

Consumption of the “minimum” is a bit of radio (local radio stations — 12%), and, for some people, usual texts corresponding to the outlook of the low-income groups. The weekly “Kommunist” available as much as the informational and entertaining “Kievskii Vedomosti” (4.4% vs. 5.1% readers) is the main if not the only source for the whole senior generation (7%), whose income is enough only for “food” (6%), and rather Russian speakers (6%). The area of informational limit is approximately similar in villages, towns and cities in case of press (14–18%) and television (4–8%), but the part of rural people who never listen to the radio is bigger (30% vs. 19–22%). So, the “minimum” has its own social and cultural territory with a low income.

The map of media consumption presents the market of informational goods as differentiated with a noticeable privilege of the “middle” class, similar to their privilege in the market of the mass goods and services as a whole. This is a place where the idea of diversity is cultivated, if possible, and new expectations are claimed. We do not talk now how to meet their expectations. Anyway, the grown opportunities for obtaining reliable information were mentioned by one third of respondents from the group of middle and high income (30–32%), and only one fifth of the “poor” (21%). As a whole, over a half of respondents do not register any significant changes in this sphere (58%).

In the modern informational society (as it is called) for which the possible extension of communication networks is not only the vital pragmatics but also a subject of inspiring reflexivity, the zones of limitations and deficient information are far from elimination. Moreover, they provide permanent reproduction of the cultural position of informa-

tional minimum with resources; they make the status of “losers” even stronger. In case of cultural segmentation in Ukraine, this position is rather stable and enters various social media — if we assess the “minimum” according to modern criteria. It causes problems in coping with the modern culture by the most respective unit in social and life aspects — young people. Despite the evident positive dynamics of recent years, two main conditions of cultural competence of young people — *using of computers and opportunity to be involved in international communications* — are still poorly provided. According to the data of 2002, over a half of respondents under 30 do not have computers (57%), two thirds do not need to use the Internet (68%), one of five wants to do it but has no opportunity (22%), a half of the respondents do not speak English (51%). In order to understand what do these statements mean, we have to study a whole spectrum of life styles forming on crossroads of different social and cultural statuses as well as their features.

Dispositions of Media Classes

To conclude, let us look at the map of media market, generalize some facts and try to explain a number of cultural implications of structural inequality (see Fig. 1). The five clusters are not “real” audiences; they are *classes of preference* in a general matrix of correlation between media sources and status features of consumers. Each of five has its own determined location in the social and cultural space.

“ASSESSIBILITY” with the relatively even distribution over a whole territory is concentrated in the urban medium with low income where people watch national channels, listen to local radio and read cheap local newspapers.

“MIDDLE CLASS” is located on the positions of well-being, active age and large cities; this fact explains the practice of consumption of various sources including prestigious and less available TV channels and radio stations, political and entertaining press. These people are most involved in modern informational networks and use various expert systems.

The opposite pole — poverty and elderly age — is the place to which the “MINIMUM” class is shifted; it is really culturally isolated.

Two other clusters are based on language preferences. They are clearly geographically located. “RUSSIAN SPEAKING” is mostly related to the Southern Ukraine, including the Crimea, where people are oriented to the Russian media, while “LOCALITY” involves the Western and

Central Ukraine, villages and towns with authority of official Ukrainian and local media.

It means that similar practices of the media consumption are related to special combinations of the main social and cultural parameters: income, age, size of town (city), or language and geographical territory. However, along with positions and practices, a mental component of structure formation is also important, that is dispositions taking part in formation of preference classes. We would like to interpret two basic continuums forming a space of preferences on the market map and formally interpreted as material status and native language (see the figure). Horizontal continuum deals with economically determined positions as well as shows a relation to physical, i. e. to social space, this continuum lies between the orientation to extension, general “openness” and closeness of areas, “limitation”. Along this continuum, there are corresponding variations of mood (social confidence — lack of confidence), claims (ambitions — passiveness), and ability to act in order to cope with this space (mobility — inertia). Vertical continuum related to language preferences (Ukrainian vs. Russian) represents attitudes to cultural territories of existence varying from cultural “rootness” to “distance”.

Classes of preferences in the media concentrate in the sectors where one continuum crosses another. Openness, orientation to various, including western, media sources together with stable national identity represent the disposition of “*MIDDLE CLASS*”. It is the only disposition with evident social confidence: “openness” and “rootness”, opposed to each other, do not prevent each other in the media consumption free from language preferences. All other dispositions are vulnerable though to different extent and in different aspects. “*MINIMUM*”, got to under-class, is oriented to a radical limitation of the media space; it seems to exist “out” of any cultural parameters. Classes of language preferences relate to communication barriers, by definition. However, “*LOCALITY*” presents a fine example of “closeness” at the local level, the peripheral orientation in contacts with the media and the corresponding narrowing space of reflexivity. In the “*RUSSIAN SPEAKING*” disposition, on the contrary, there is a tendency to go “outside”, beyond the limits of communication legitimized by national citizenship. Material and educational factors gives certain social stability to this disposition, but estrangement from local identity inevitably causes imbalance in culture. Preference for “*ASSESSIBILITY*” represents the mass consumption that devours codes of inequality and tends to cancel differences, but, as any standards, makes it too simple without a hope for success. All five key dispositions

towards the traditional media participate in formation and marking of life-styles; they represent the ways, signs, and senses with which culture refers them to culture.

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